

Thank you for this honor. I am grateful to receive this because I will always associate it with one of the great pleasures of my life—being in the ACT production of A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC last year. I truly enjoyed that experience and was proud to be a part of such a beautiful production. And of course, I got to work with two of you – Michael McIntyre and Caitlan Thomas.

I am so happy for this special honor that recognizes the career I have been lucky enough to have over the years. Although luck, as we all know, is a confluence of opportunity and preparation. I've always worked hard to prepare for auditions, and equally hard to fulfill every role I got to play. And I'm sure you know that LUCK is an acronym for Laboring Under Correct Knowledge.

I am grateful for the training I had that set me on a path to discovery as I began my life as a working actor. Training gives you an excellent foundation on which to build a career. It gives you a benchmark to work against, and a springboard for further learning. I urge you to do your vocal and body warm-up every day, to keep your instrument tuned, while you become more and more expert at playing it.

I discovered you need to be pretty ruthless about your assets and liabilities, as in any business. The profession you have trained for can be demanding and unforgiving. It can eat your heart and soul with the disappointment that is inevitable in such a competitive world.

So to counter all this -- You must love what you do, passionately. You must keep faith with yourself. Experiment with your own parameters. Never cease growing and learning. Become a sponge for knowledge -- and exercise the discipline that is the cornerstone of craft.

I think discipline is a misunderstood word today. We live in a very free society, and school, life itself, is not as rigorous as it once was. The rules have slackened in a lot of areas. But the artist must always respect the discipline of his craft. The perfection of that craft is the work of a lifetime. A true artist never stops honing his craft. Michaelangelo, when he was 80, said "I'm still learning."

The architect Corbusier said, "Technique is the foundation of expression" and I think that is true for all the arts, and it has been true for me as an actress. Technique is sometimes not

given its due. For me, technique – and imagination -- have been the foundation on which I have built everything I've done.

I did several bus and truck tours when I was young – what a great way to learn what you know, and how to use it in a wide variety of venues. And over the years, I have learned a lot from the plays that I have had the good fortune to be in. In many ways, theatre has been my guru, my teacher, presenting me with ideas and perspectives to sharpen my mind, and offering me a chance to become other people, to live through feelings and experiences I might not normally have had the opportunity to know. I have investigated other times, customs, and modes of behavior; and researching them has always been a pleasure for me. But what it all comes down to every time is that human behavior, human nature, doesn't really change. If you "hold a mirror up to nature," as Hamlet tells us, you can't go wrong.

And I think that's why I love the theatre so much. It's a way to study mankind – examine who we are, rejoice in our foibles, celebrate our nobility. I've been inspired by so many areas of human expression. Classical music is something I love and it helps me understand the arc and surge of a scene or play. I love to read books (especially historical fiction), which

illuminate another period of time. Watching dance inspires me to express thru the physical form. Other actors are inspiring in how they tackle material and give themselves over to it. Paintings have taught me a lot about make-up and mood. There are so many expressions of beauty everywhere that inspire me do theatre. And I am so grateful for all the opportunities I've had to hold that mirror up to nature.

Thank you for your recognition of my mirror, of my craft, which I have never stopped working on. I cherish your acknowledgement of that and I thank you for this honorary degree.

As Sebastian says in Twelfth Night: "I can no answer make but thanks, And thanks, and ever thanks."